

History of  
Olney Presbyterian Church  
Gastonia, North Carolina



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1793-1947

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By Rev. T. G. Tate

To: Ruth  
From: Marie  
Christmas 1990



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Olney Presbyterian Church  
1793-1947

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By Rev. T. G. Tate



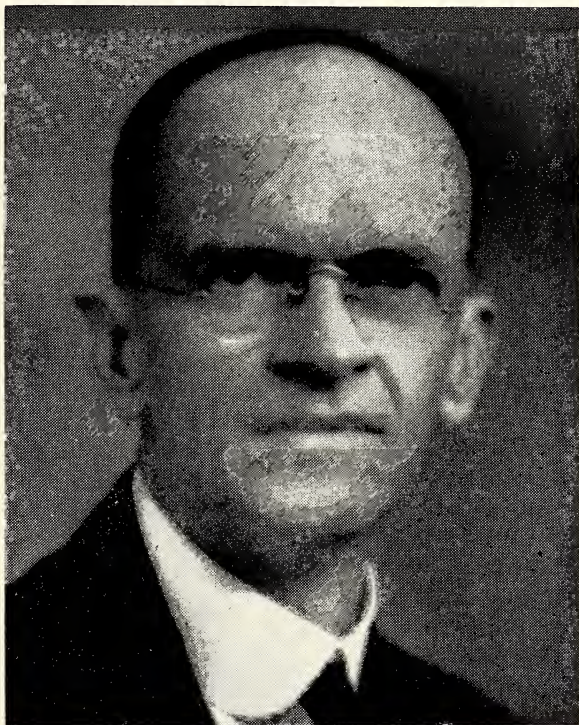
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# HISTORY OF OLNEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



By REV. T. G. TATE  
Pastor 1922-1943

## DEDICATION

To the officers and members of Olney Presbyterian Church in the hope that they will emulate the faith and perserverance of the Fathers of this Church and in grateful memory of the cooperation and prayers of the church during twenty-one years of service.

Published in 1947 by Mr. W. W. Glenn, Elder in the First Presbyterian Church, Lincolnton, N. C., and son of Mr. W. D. Glenn, Elder in Olney Church and a pioneer of the Pleasant Ridge Section of Gaston County.

# HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

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## INTRODUCTION

This history is gathered from the minutes of the Synods of the Carolinas, the Synods of North Carolina and South Carolina and of the Presbyteries of South Carolina, Orange, Concord, and the Independent Presbyterian Church found in the Historical Foundation in Montreat, North Carolina; a History of Olney Church by Rev. G. A. Sparrow, pastor from 1893 to 1921, published in 1902; also, information taken from the files of The Charlotte Observer and The Gastonia Daily Gazette; tradition and recollections of the early history told by members of the Church and community, and knowledge based on twenty-one years of service as pastor. It is not claimed that this history is correct in every detail, but is as nearly correct as a careful check of the sources mentioned can make it. However, this history was finally completed in Murphy, N. C., and no opportunity for rechecking the files was available. Thanks are due Mrs. C. P. Robinson, Historian of Woman's Auxiliary of Olney Church, Gastonia, N. C., for her assistance in writing the history of the Woman's Auxiliary; Dr. J. K. Hall, Belmont, N. C., Chairman of History Committee of Kings Mountain Presbytery, for verifying historical facts and dates; and Miss Mary Lee Robinson, Gastonia, N. C., for preparing the manuscript for the printers.

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## NAME

Rev. G. A. Sparrow states in his history of Olney Church that after diligent search nothing could be found about the origin of the name, Olney. It is the opinion of the writer, shared by such historians as Dr. W. L. Lingle, of Davidson, N. C., and former professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., that the name originated from Olney, England. Rev. John Newton was curate in the Church of England from 1767 to 1780. He was very evangelical and is best known for his connection with the poet, William Cowper, who settled at Olney, England, in 1767. Cowper contributed hymns to the "Olney Hymns," a book somewhat like the Moody-Sankey gospel hymns of a generation ago. This book was published in 1799, but the influence of John Newton and William Cowper could have caused the adoption of the name Olney by this congregation. Dr. Clarence E. McCartney, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pa., also advances this idea. There is a church in Philadelphia named Olney Presbyterian Church, but organized in 1898 and named doubtless for the district, Olney, in which it is located. Several towns and cities in the United States have this name.

## ORGANIZATION

Olney Church was organized from the congregation of the Bethel Presbyterian Church in York County, S. C. Bethel was established in 1764, and has celebrated her 175th anniversary. The pioneers who settled this section of the Carolinas were known to be God fearing men and women, devoted to the cause of liberty and religion. Many gave their lives at Kings Mountain and other battlefields.

Thirty-one years after the organization of Bethel, we have the first reference historically of the congregation which later became Olney Church. In the minutes of the Presbytery of South Carolina, dated September 25, 1794, mention is made of a collection for missions taken by Rev. W. C. Davis at "North Bethel." Presumably outdoor meetings in a brush arbor and other meetings had been held prior to this time, according to tradition in the congregation even today. At the same meeting of the Presbytery of South Carolina on the same date, a resolution was offered by Rev. James McRae "respecting the people on the north side of Bethel with petition to allow Orange Presbytery in North Carolina to take them under their care if the Presbytery of South Carolina had no objection." The Presbytery of South Carolina voted that there was "no objection provided the people of North Bethel pay all arrearages or their proportionate share of whatever deficiencies may be whilst in connection with Bethel." Unfortunately the minutes of Orange Presbytery for 1795 are lost, and no further mention is made of the transfer or organization by the minutes of the Presbytery of South Carolina.

Concord Presbytery was formed in 1795, and apparently Olney was transferred to Concord Presbytery, for Concord Presbytery met in 1798 at Olney, so the date 1793 is approximately correct. It is two years too early for the formal organization, but as the congregation on the north side of Bethel across the state line had been having meetings somewhere near the site of Olney, the traditional date 1793 will be accepted. In 1797 Rev. G. G. McWhorter was listed as stated supply, and in 1799 Rev. W. C. Davis as pastor. There is no doubt that he was the first pastor. Sparrow's History of Olney Church states that the organization of the church was due to the theological errors of Rev. W. C. Davis, but this is not correct. since there are minutes and records in the Historical Foundation in Montreat, North Carolina, now, which were not available to Mr. Sparrow, showing that the theological defection of Rev. W. C. Davis and others occurred around 1810. The organization of Olney Church evidently grew out of the necessity for a church on the north side of the state line due to the fact that a portion of the congregation of Bethel resided in this



territory and were too remote from their place of worship.

At the meeting of Concord Presbytery on October 10, 1798, four ministers and three elders were present. They met at the house of James Martyn at 7:00 P. M., October 11, 1798, evidently adjourning to his house from the church for convenience. In 1804 Rev. James McRee was stated supply of Olney, and a memorial was presented to Concord Presbytery complaining of the "conduct of a certain society in the neighborhood, which claimed special revelations from God and manifested enthusiastic impulses, laymen administered the Communion and Baptism and married people." Disorders were also reported in the Kingstree Church in South Carolina. (Concord Presbytery evidently covered some part of South Carolina). Rev. W. C. Davis was directed to discipline the offenders, which duty he reported performed. In 1810 Olney Church was reported to Concord Presbytery as vacant.

### DEFECTION OF REV. W. C. DAVIS

The theological errors of Rev. W. C. Davis were reviewed by the General Assembly in 1810, and his book "The Gospel Plan" was condemned as unsound. His case was discussed in the Synod of the Carolinas the same year, probably prior to the meeting of the General Assembly. The Presbytery of South Carolina was dissolved. Mr. Davis at this time must have been a member of the Presbytery of South Carolina, and the Presbytery of South Carolina was made a part of Concord Presbytery. In 1811 the Synod of the Carolinas asked Concord Presbytery if the way was open to discipline Rev. W. C. Davis, but no mention of Concord Presbytery's answer is given in the minutes. Notwithstanding his theological errors, which we will not go into, he was a man of marked ability and force of character. He organized Independent Presbyterian Churches in North Carolina and South Carolina, along with many other ministers who were sympathetic to him and his views, and organized an association of Independent Presbyterian Churches about 1811-12, and carried many churches into this conference. An Independent Presbyterian Church was organized at Olney, and other churches went into this conference or association, as the minutes of the Independent Presbyterian Church show, namely: Beth Shiloh, Salem, Yorkville, Harmony, Tabor, Hepzibah, Bullock's Creek, Olivet, Bethany, Hopewell, and later Union and Carmel Hill.

The original Olney Church was small and vacant most of the time for fifty years. The Independent Presbyterian Church at Olney was more active and better supplied with ministers. Tradition says that preaching was held once a month in both

churches on the same day and at the same hour. Olney Presbyterian Church in the years prior to the Civil War was often vacant, and reported fifty members in 1844. Rev. James D. Hall supplied the church in 1862.

### UNION OF THE TWO CHURCHES

The union of the Synod of South Carolina and the Conference of the Independent Presbyterian Church occurred in 1863-64. The session of Olney Presbyterian Church overtured Concord Presbytery in 1864 "how to receive the Moderator and Clerk of the Independent Presbyterian Church at Olney," and was told to receive them by statement of their faith in good standing. This must have been the time when the two churches at Olney were formally united, and which was after the Independent Presbyterian Church Association and the Synod of South Carolina had united. Olney sent to Concord Presbytery on September 13, 1865, Nathan Shotwell, minister, and Robert Torrence, elder; and in 1866, W. M. Kilpatrick,



OLNEY INDEPENDENT CHURCH ERECTED BEFORE  
CIVIL WAR

minister, and James McNair, elder; also in 1866, W. R. Holland represented the church as elder. Mr. J. J. Kennedy was also reported as licentiate and one hundred thirteen members.

After the union of the two churches at Olney, the con-

gregation took the best building, a frame building, which was built just prior to the Civil War. Many members of the church say their fathers helped construct the frame building, which was later brick veneered and Sunday School rooms arranged in the basement in 1929-30. Sunday School rooms had already been installed in the rear of the large wooden building and the doors on the north side closed. This white frame building was the third building erected on the site. The first building, probably of logs, stood behind the frame building occupied by the Independent Church. The second building occupied by



**OLNEY CHURCH, 1929 to 1945**

Olney Presbyterian Church stood near the present location of the manse where the Session House originally stood until the manse was erected in 1922.

The white frame building, the third house of worship, built on the grounds and used by the Independent Presbyterian Church at Olney until the union of the two churches, was at



the time of the union taken for the house of worship for the united congregations. It was kept repaired, altered and painted until 1929, when the church decided to build a brick veneer its present building. The rectangular frame building was raised and a basement dug underneath, giving room for twelve classrooms and a large hall to be used for banquets and other meetings. The outside of the church was brick veneered and a furnace installed. A steeple had previously been added to the church when a bell was donated by Messrs. Jonas Dickson and T. E. Robinson. The Building Committee of the brick veneered church were Jonas Dickson, E. B. Robinson and J. Reece Huffstetler, and the Finance Committee consisted of R. C. Robinson, Treasurer, Ennis Jackson and C. S. Dixon. The improvements were made at a cost of approximately \$8000.00, most of which was paid that year. A corner-stone on the new brick church was laid with appropriate exercises on February 28, 1930, during an evangelistic meeting held at the church by Rev. John W. Moore, of the Methodist Church, who is a son of Olney Church. Mr. Moore made the prayer of dedication; Rev. J. H. Henderlite, D. D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Gastonia, North Carolina, made an address and the pastor of the church, Rev. T. G. Tate, presided. The following editorial entitled "A Country Church That is Not Dead" appeared in The Gastonia Daily Gazette at that time.:

"Thursday will be a happy day in the congregation of Olney Presbyterian Church in South Gastonia. On that date the corner-stone of a remodeled and improved church building will be laid with appropriate ceremonies.

"Olney is one of the honored and historic churches of Gaston County. Its history dates far back. From a history of the church written by Rev. G. A. Sparrow, a former pastor of sainted memory in the annals of the church and community, we learn that Olney was formed from a part of the Bethel Presbyterian Church, York County, South Carolina. Originally, its early history is a story, therefore, of the settlement of the Scotch-Irish, emigrating from Pennsylvania into North and South Carolina, into what was then known as Tryon County, North Carolina, later becoming York County, South Carolina, and Gaston County, North Carolina. Bethel Church was organized in the year 1764, several years before the Declaration of Independence. Many of the bold and intrepid heroes of the battle of Kings Mountain and many other battles of the Revolution were from Bethel and their bodies were removed there for burial. A number of these heroes are also buried in the Olney cemetery.

"The existing records of Olney extend no farther back than 1793. Some historians, however, like Dr. Foote, author

of sketches of North Carolina, put the organization at a much earlier date and the probability of preaching dates there prior to 1793.

"Olney is a shining example of a country church that is not decadent. On the other hand, it is a living, growing, enterprising church. Its membership is increasing instead of dwindling.

"It is to the country church that the world must look to for the stamina that will carry on the church work. The country church is supplying the leaders now. More than half the candidates for the ministry come from the country churches and most of the present church officials now were trained in a country church in their younger days.

"Olney is a typical example of this sort of country church. It has sent out ministers of the gospel, elders and deacons to other churches. The prosperous First Church of Gastonia is an outgrowth of this one time small country church. All honor to old Olney!"

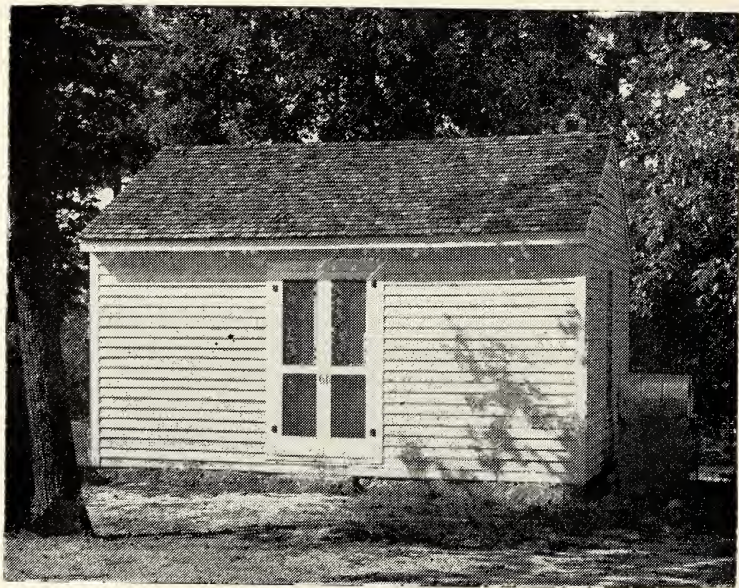
## THE SESSION HOUSE

The Session House was erected many years ago and used as a meeting place of the elders where the candidates for church membership were examined. It was thus used until some time after the first Sunday School rooms were partitioned in the white frame building. In 1922 it was moved to the rear of the manse and used as a store room until 1943, when it was restored and moved to its present location near the church. It is now used as a pastor's study. Restoration was made through the generosity of Mrs. J. Lee Robinson and W. R. Sparrow, as a memorial to two former members of Olney Church, J. Lee Robinson and Mrs. Mary M. Robinson. It was rededicated at the 150th Anniversary on July 25, 1943.

Shown is the old Session House of Olney Presbyterian Church which has been restored to its former style and lines through the kindness and generosity of Mrs. J. Lee Robinson, in honor of her husband, the late J. Lee Robinson, a son of Olney Church, and W. R. Sparrow, in honor of his grandmother, Mrs. Mary M. Robinson. The Session House is built of heart pine lumber, and most of the fastenings are wooden pegs. The boards used are wide pine plank. The weatherboarding is the original timber. It is thought that the old session house was built when the forefathers of Olney folks were gathering under a brush arbor for worship. It was being used as a store house and out building for the manse when Ennis Jackson,



Raymond Robinson and others decided that it was of too historic value to be allowed to fall into disuse. It is equipped with lights



THE SESSION HOUSE

and some of the old furniture of the church is placed there. It was found in working over the old house that there had once been a fire-place and chimney in it.

## PRESBYTERIAL CONNECTIONS

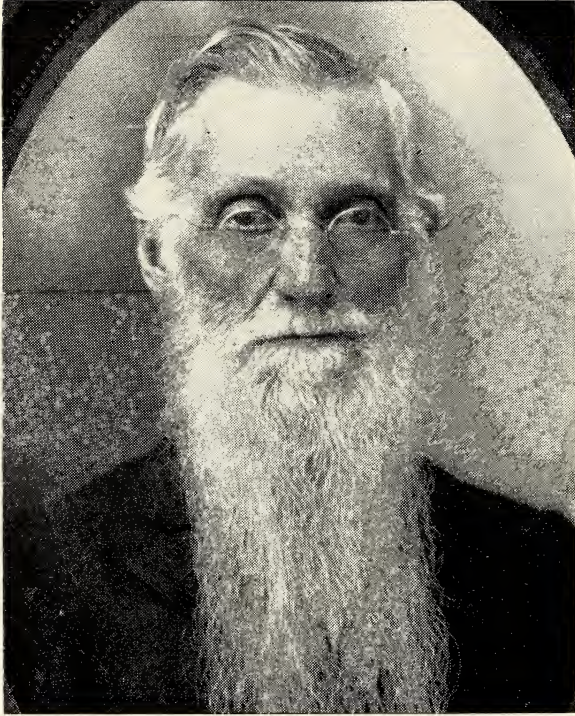
Olney Church has had connections with many Presbyteries in her long history. The petition for organization was drawn up to Orange Presbytery in 1794, but there are no minutes of Orange Presbytery for that year extant. Concord Presbytery was set off from Orange in 1795. Evidently Olney was either formally organized by Concord or soon put in that Presbytery, for in 1798 Concord Presbytery met at Olney, according to its minutes. Bethel Presbytery was established by the Synod of North Carolina, October 24, 1824, in Statesville, North Carolina, and held its first meeting in Beersheba Church, York County, South Carolina. Olney was enrolled as one of its churches. Its connection with Bethel Presbytery was severed on April 4, 1828, and Olney was again listed as one of the churches of a Presbytery at Morganton, North Carolina, or Morganton Presbytery (evidently Concord Presbytery meeting at Morganton) in 1841. Concord Presbytery had oversight of Olney until 1868. Mecklenburg Presbytery was organized in Morganton, North Carolina, October 16, 1869, by order of the Synod of North Carolina, embracing the seventeen counties of Western North Carolina, including Gaston, and Olney was enrolled. At a meeting of the Synod of North Carolina in Winston-Salem on October 24, 1902, it was ordered that Kings Mountain Presbytery be formed, and the ministers and representatives of the churches in Lincoln, Gaston, Cleveland, Rutherford and Polk Counties met in Lincolnton, North Carolina, November 18, 1902, and formed Kings Mountain Presbytery, Olney Church was included and remains in that Presbytery today.

## PASTORS OF THE CHURCH

The church in her long history has had only nineteen pastors, while there were many temporary supplies which we have already mentioned. The pastors are as follows: W. C. Davis, James S. Adams, Henry M. Kerr, Cyrus Johnson, Rev. Mr. Pomrory, Robert Russell, A. L. Watts, S. Murray, James D. Hall (two pastorates), J. Leroy Davis, J. J. Kennedy (two pastorates), J. S. Barr, Thomas E. Davis, W. B. Corbett, S. H. Spencer, W. C. C. Foster, G. A. Sparrow, T. G. Tate, and Neal E. Truesdale.

In the Independent Presbyterian Church at Olney: W. C. Davis, R. Y. Russell, G. W. Davis, James Stuart Bailey, J. O. Daniel, W. W. Carothers, and W. W. Ratchford served as pastors. Rev. J. O. Daniel died while pastor and is buried in the cemetery.

Sessional Records prior to April 1, 1839, have been lost,



REV. J. J. KENNEDY

The above is a picture of Rev. J. J. Kennedy who held two pastorates at Olney Church. The first in 1863 just after graduating from Columbia Seminary, and again from 1883 to 1889.

He was married in 1865 to Nancy Jane Holland, daughter of Squire Isaac Holland, of the Olney section. Two children, of the six born of this union, Mr. J. H. Kennedy and Mrs. Frost Torrence, both of Gastonia, survive.

Mr. Kennedy was a saintly man of God and his memory is held in sacred reverence by all those who came under the influence of his gospel preaching.





**REV. G. A. SPARROW**  
**Pastor 1893-1921**

and much valuable history is not available about Olney Presbyterian Church. No attempt is made to give the exact dates. Rev. G. A. Sparrow was installed as pastor in November, 1893, by a commission of Mecklenburg Presbytery. He served faithfully until resigning in 1921, when he became full time pastor of Union Presbyterian Church. He passed to his eternal reward at Montreat while on vacation in 1922. His pastorate was a very significant and useful one and the longest in the history of the church—twenty-nine years. During part of that time he also preached in Glenn's School House near Pleasant Ridge on Sunday afternoons after supplying Olney in the morning.

With the growth and expansion of the cotton mill industry in Gastonia and Gaston County, just preceding and immediately following the World War I, the church began to take on new life and to add to her membership. Five cotton mills were built within sight of the church, hundreds of people came to live in

the industrial villages surrounding it, and the population of the city pushed out southward, until the tide which formerly only flowed outward as the young people left home to make a living, now reversed itself and Olney began to reap her reward to some extent. She also received encouragement and financial support from the Rankins and others who were interested in the community.

Rev. T. G. Tate came to Olney as the first full time pastor on March 1, 1922, and served the church twenty-one years, the second longest pastorate. On June 30, 1943, he accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church, Oakland, Florida.

During the twenty-one years of this pastorate, the church membership was increased from one hundred and sixty-five to three hundred, with four hundred and twenty members added. Several notable events happened during this time. An evangelistic meeting was held February 23-28, 1930, when the pastor was assisted by Rev. John W. Moore, a Methodist minister and son of Olney Church, during which forty-eight members were received into the church and fifty-eight in all that year, one of the largest ingatherings ever made in all of Olney's history. Three Young People's Societies (formerly called Christian Endeavor) were organized for the Senior Young People, Intermediate and Pioneer ages. A man's organization was maintained for a while; then its activity merged with the Men's Bible Class.

On June 13, 1943, a special service was held honoring the men from Olney Church in the Armed Forces during World War II. At this service the Service Flag, presented by the Young People's Society, was dedicated.

The congregation met annually on the church grounds for a Sunday School picnic, but in later years went to the city parks on several occasions. Home-comings for all the former members and friends were held and sumptuous dinners spread by the ladies under the trees at noon. The Gaston County American Tune Book Association met at the church in the summer every few years, rotating among other churches in the County, to which large crowds gathered and sang from the old American Tune Book. At the close of Mr. Tate's pastorate, the congregation gathered on the church grounds at a large picnic on June 24, 1943, honoring him and his family and presenting them with substantial tokens of appreciation, which were gratefully received.

For several years prior to 1943, the 150th Anniversary of the organization of Olney Church had been discussed. Early in the year of 1943 a Celebration Committee, consisting of Eli P. Lineberger, chairman, Rev. T. G. Tate, T. Q. Howe, W. Roy Robinson, Ennis Jackson, R. C. Robinson, Mrs. Ennis



Jackson, Mrs. Neal Hawkins and Mrs. C. P. Robinson, was appointed by the Session. This committee worked untiringly to make this celebration the biggest day in the church's history. The following is a program of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration:

July 25, 1943

### MORNING PROGRAM

Prelude

Doxology

Invocation

Gloria Patri

Hymn No. 40—"Holy, Holy, Holy"

Scripture

Announcements

Offering

Solo—Mrs. Lee Settlemyer

Hymn No. 25—"Faith of Our Fathers"

Sermon—Dr. Walter L. Lingle

Hymn No. 76—"How Firm a Foundation"

Dedication of Session House—Prayer of Dedication by Rev.  
Howard Wilson

Dinner on Grounds

### AFTERNOON PROGRAM

Brief History of Olney Church brought to date by former  
pastor—Rev. T. G. Tate, Oakland, Fla.

Address of Welcome—Elder Eli P. Lineberger

Response—Rev. Howard Wilson, Concord, N. C.

Greetings from Synod of N. C.—Rev. J. O. Mann, Moderator

From Kings Mountain Presbytery—Rev. W. S. Patterson, Moder-  
ator.

From Kings Mountain Presbyterial—Mrs. George Patterson,  
Past President

From Former Pastors—Letter from Dr. John Corbett, son of  
former pastor, Rev. W. B. Corbett.

From Sons in the Ministry—Rev. Howard Wilson, Rev. R. L.  
Torrence, and Rev. Paul Thrower

From Mother Church—Dr. T. N. Dulin, Elder, Bethel Presby-  
terian Church

From Neighboring Churches—First Church, Gastonia; West  
Avenue Church, Armstrong Memorial, Union,  
Goshen, New Hope, Bowling Green, Calvary Bap-  
tist, Pisgah, Crowders Creek, and First Associate  
Reformed Presbyterian Church.

From Former Officers and Members—R. Lee Falls, Clyde Jones,  
Ralph Dixon, W. W. Faires, Earl Ratchford, Clyde

Forbes, J. H. Kennedy and Marshall Dilling.  
Benediction.

From the files of The Gastonia Daily Gazette we have the following account:

"Olney Church Has Big Celebration on 150th Birthday.

"Olney Presbyterian Church 150 year old, had the greatest day in its history Sunday with the observance of its sesquicentennial.

"Friends and former members, as well as a large number of other visitors, some 800 or more, gathered in an all-day meeting, featured by a dinner at mid-day which was unsurpassed in quality and quantity. The history of the church was read by the former pastor, Rev. T. G. Tate, Dr. W. L. Lingle, former president of Davidson College, delivered a profound sermon, and greetings were brought from many friends and former members.

"Dr. Lingle's sermon in the morning was from two texts 'Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,' and the other, 'Behold I stand at the door and knock.' Dr. Lingle, quoting the familiar story of Peter and his conversation with Christ, said that the church was built by the Lord Jesus Christ. 'He is the Builder and the Creator, and it was built, not by might or by power, but by my Strength.'

"Dr. Lingle cited the many enemies and foes of the church to prove that the declaration 'all the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,' viz: the persecution of the early apostles and disciples, the wave of infidelity that swept over the church in the middle ages and, finally, the last World War and the present World War, none of which has been able to destroy the church. Mrs. Lee Settlemyer rendered a solo during the morning service.

"Reading the history of the church, Rev. Mr. Tate gave many interesting facts, much information that had been gleaned from the files of the Presbyterian Foundation at Montreat, from minutes of the Synods of North and South Carolina, of the presbyteries of Bethel and Orange and of the early days of the church. It was in 1793 that the first notice of Olney was given in the early minutes, although it was evident that there had been a preaching point known as North Bethel here for some time prior to the actual date of the organization.

"The Rev. W. C. Davis, who was a stormy petrel in the days of the early church, was one of the first pastors, but he was accused of alleged heresies and was later dismissed.

For a number of years there were two Olney churches, one the regular church and the other an independent church organized by those who agreed with Rev. Mr. Davis. For many years two separate churches were maintained, but finally they were merged and the present building of Olney was that one used by the independent church.

"The early days of Olney have been described and brought up to date by the late pastor, Rev. George A. Sparrow, and printed in booklet form. In 1798 Concord Presbytery met with the Olney Church, it is stated in the minutes of Concord Presbytery on file at Montreat.

"The dinner on the grounds at noon was one of the most abundant and delicious ever spread in the county. One long table several hundred feet long was not enough to hold all that had been brought. Additional table space was provided after the noon hour. There was an abundance of ham, chicken and other eatables. The invocation was by Rev. Paul Thrower, pastor of the Camp Green Presbyterian Church and a son-in-law of the church. He married Miss Elizabeth Robinson, daughter of Mrs. C. P. Robinson.

"At the conclusion of the dinner, the session house was dedicated with prayer by Rev. Howard Wilson, pastor of the Bayliss Memorial Church in Concord, a son of Olney, after the history of the session house had been read by Ennis Jackson, treasurer of the church and chairman of the committee which restored the old building.

"At the afternoon meeting greetings were received from a number of visitors. Rev. J. O. Mann, moderator of the Synod of North Carolina, spoke on behalf of the Synod. Several sons of the church spoke, Rev. R. L. Torrence, Orlando, Fla., Rev. Paul P. Thrower, who married a daughter of the church, and Mrs. Thrower also spoke. Other churches and speakers taking part were Dr. Dulin of Bethel Church, Hugh Query of First Presbyterian Church, Gastonia, the West Avenue Presbyterian Church, the Armstrong Memorial, Union represented by Rev. W. L. Baker, Goshen, New Hope by Rev. W. D. Wolfe, Calvary Baptist by Rev. W. W. Abernethy, Pisgah A. R. P. by Walter Oates, First A. R. P., Gastonia, by Dr. T. H. McDill, Crowders Creek Church, Bible Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, by Clyde Jones.

"J. H. Kennedy, of Gastonia, whose father was the late Rev. J. J. Kennedy, was also among the speakers as a representative of the former pastors.

"An extremely interesting letter from the son of another former pastor, Rev. W. C. Corbett, was read from Dr. James W.

Corbett, of Camden. It will be published in The Gazette in a day or two. It gives some interesting facts and information about early Gastonia and Pleasant Ridge.

"Mrs. George V. Patterson, representing the Synodical of North Carolina, and speaking for Mrs. Ennis Jackson, president of the Kings Mountain Presbyterial, brought greetings from these two organizations.

"Rev. W. S. Patterson, of the Covenant Church in Lowell, brought greeting from that church.

"Dr. Dulin, representing the mother church, Bethel, presented to the session of the church a copy of the history of Bethel Church, containing much of the early information about the organization of Olney.

"Dr. McDill brought in some of the early history of the church as it is connected with the Associate Reformed Church. The A. R. P. Church is made up of a union of the Associate and the Reformed churches, and its doctrine is the same as that of the Presbyterians.

"Other speakers were Rev. Frank M. Kincaid, a grandson of the church, Rev. Judson Shannon, W. W. Faires, former deacon, and Marshall Dilling, who was raised in the community and attended church there as a boy and went to school on the church ground."

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The following is a letter from Dr. John W. Corbett, of Camden, S. C., son of Rev. W. B. Corbett, former pastor of Olney Church which was read at the 150th Anniversary celebration:

June 29th, 1943.

Mr. E. P. Lineberger,  
Route No. 3,  
Gastonia, N. C.

Dear Mr. Lineberger:

I am in receipt of a letter from Rev. T. G. Tate, of Olney Presbyterian Church, inviting my father, Rev. William Bell Corbett, if alive, or me as his son, to be present at the 150th anniversary, or if unable to attend to send some word of greeting. My father died at Bennettsville, S. C., June, 1894, and I am over eighty years old, retired four years ago, an invalid after fifty-five years of active practice, and while it would give me great pleasure, I will not be physically able to be present.

I have very pleasant recollections of life at Olney, and with the verbosity of an old man, may write too long a letter to

be read publicly, but it may be of interest privately to you and others.

While my father was buying and building, the family lived in Yorkville in 1876. The house which was to be our home for several years, was erected between Olney Church and the road-bed of the Chester and Lenoir Narrow Gauge Railroad on which the rails were being laid. At the same time they were finishing the laying of rails on the Charlotte and Atlanta Air Line division of the Richmond and Danville road. A joint agency was soon established with the Pages for the Air Line and the Fayssoux from Yorkville for the Narrow Gauge. The Pages were brothers from Marietta, Georgia, and the Fayssoux crowd was composed of father and two sons; and the favorite pastime, there being no business at first except the shipment of many barrels of corn whiskey from the many stills in Gaston County, was a game called Dom Pedre. Later Mr. J. Q. Holland and my father established the First Church at Gastonia, and Mr. Holland opened the first store, a short distance south of the depot. Not very long afterward Dr. Bob Adams from Bethel opened a drug store.

Our postoffice was Pleasant Ridge, where there was the store of J. R. Falls and son, the management being in the hands of one of my most intimate friends, George Falls, and sometimes he had me to help him with books and collections. The custom was in those days for the customers to come to the store early in the morning and talk and walk around, and not beginning to buy until late, when there would be a rush. A Portuguese by the name of Revel occupied the back room, and had his shoe shop there. He was also the night caretaker.

I had many friends among the Huffstetlers, Fronebergers, Ledbetters, Falls, and not to miss Meek Crawford, who had the finest four-mule team I have ever seen. I used to ride with him some, particularly when he was hauling Barytes, which I found on enquiry was used for adulterating sugar. We would ride the two wheel mules, and have a picnic lunch; fine for a small boy like me.

I remember well Old Olney, and the two sermons every other Sunday, with an intermission between for eats. When time for the second sermon some one would beat on the wall of the church with a switch, and they would all return to their seats. The singing was fine, singing schools all over the country were very common then, and they used the old time shaped notes. Mr. W. I. Stowe lead in the singing, after sounding the chord. Mr. Joe Kincaid was the leading elder of the church and lived only a short distance up the road towards Gastonia. Others I remember well: Mr. Dave Walker and his wife, who lost their only child, a son, at a saw mill accident; he lived just below



Pleasant Ridge at the fork, where his shop was; the three McCallister sisters were very kind to me; Dr. Torrence at Crowder's Creek, Capt. J. K. Marshall, the Narrow Gauge conductor, Bill Jones, the other one, and Superintendent E. E. Thomas were at all times nice to me.

In those days there was nothing at all between Pleasant Ridge and the joint agency at Gastonia, except the trestle over Catawba Creek, about half way; so when I passed there about twenty-five years after, looking for my old home, I was lost for a while. A street car line extended to the old crossing on the railroad track west of Olney, and it was so built up with houses, I had trouble in finding the old home. I enjoyed looking at the old church, the cemetery with the row of cenotaphs, and even went down to the spring. But it was all strange and crowded out by the building of the community. I felt frankly disappointed. On this same trip, going further south, I stopped at the fork, and saw Mr. and Mrs. Walker on their piazza, and was recognized, though he was at that time totally blind.

I have neglected to mention an old lady, Mrs. Sarah Ann Thomas, and her daughter, Louisa. Mrs. Thomas was always around if she heard of sickness or trouble. Another lady always considerate of me was Mrs. Jackson Falls, whose daughter married a dentist by the name of Glenn. She lived near Pleasant Ridge, just across the branch. I could go on a long time telling of trips to Kings Mountain Pinnacle, and the cave just below the Pinnacle full of rattle snakes; a pleasant visit to Shiloh Camp Ground, which was just north of Gastonia, near the rather modern home of Mr. Jenkins. People lived for weeks at this camp ground, with three or four sermons a day.

All the time I lived at Pleasant Ridge was spent in my father tutoring me in arts and also in medicine. I worked for a short time at a saw mill run by Crow & Bean, a mile or so from my home. My father kept bees and I helped with the building of hives, frames for same, and looked after the horse and cow.

This is too long for the public to use, but you and some of the older men of the community may be interested. It has brought back to me a great many pleasant recollections of the kindest hearted people on the face of the earth, people who at the time I knew them, were noted as their words being as good as a bond. Where there was no thievery, no swindling, and general obedience to the Golden Rule.

I wish for you all a happy celebration, and for Old Olney a bright and productive future, and am very sorry that I cannot be present at the celebration.

Sincerely,

JNO. W. CORBETT, M. D.

## MEMBERSHIP

Olney now has a substantial membership of three hundred seventy-five members and a bright future in the growing section of Gastonia and Gaston County in which she is located.

Olney has furnished to the Church four of her sons to preach the gospel: Rev. John W. Moore, pastor Central Methodist Church, Mooresville, N. C. Rev. Guy Mendenhall, deceased, Methodist Church; Rev. Howard Wilson, pastor of Bayless Memorial Presbyterian Church, Concord, N. C.; and Rev. Robert L. Torrence, pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Cuthbert, Georgia. Also one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Robinson Thrower, wife of Rev. Paul P. Thrower, pastor of Camp Greene Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N. C.

## ELDERS

The elders who have served the church are: Enoch McNair, John Hill, William Dickson, Isaac Holland, F. H. Holland, Ezra B. Wilson, Caleb A. Huffstetler, William R. Holland, James McNair, Robert Torrence, A. C. Dickson, Samuel C. Robinson, W. W. Torrence, John C. Torrence, R. C. G. Love, Joseph M. Huffstetler, John R. Miller, James Q. Holland, Joseph R. Kincaid, Samuel M. Wilson, James R. Shannon, Andrew Roseman, W. D. Glenn, W. M. No'len, George M. Dickson, John A. Huffstetler, D. J. Howe, R. Q. Howe, Eli P. Lineberger, L. M. Ratchford, E. D. Huffstetler, P. L. Ratchford E. B. Robinson, Sr., W. L. Hutchinson, C. N. Falls, J. W. Jones, W. H. Thrower, S. A. Lewis, T. Q. Howe, C. S. Dixon, Clyde A. Jones, Joe S. Hoke, Otis Jones, W. Roy Robinson and Jonas Stroupe.

The present Session is composed of Eli P. Lineberger, E. D. Huffstetler, W. L. Hutcrinson, C. N. Falls, T. Q. Howe, Joe S. Hoke, Otis Jones, W. Roy Robinson and Jonas Stroupe.

T. Q. Howe is clerk of Session, as were his father, R. Q. Howe, and his grandfather, D. J. Howe.

## DEACONS

The men who have served as deacons, as taken from the existing records are: M. L. Holland, William D. Carro'l, Robert Bell, George W. McAllister, W. R. Hill, A. C. Dixon, John R. Miller, S. M. Wilson, H. A. Torrence, Dr. R. H. Adams, S. L. Robinson, J. R. Shannon, J. J. Wilson, W. L. Robinson, S. A. Lewis, John Frank Dickson, James W. Hil, W. J. Adams, W. L. Grissom, Clyde Forbes, C. P. Robinson, R. C. Robinson, S. P. Grissom, C. S. Dixon, C. M. Faires, F. S. Lineberger, L. R. Brandon, C. C. Hoffman, Clarence Huffstetler, P. A. Chester, Ralph A. Dickson, C. H. Huffstetler, Coit S. Howe, Otis Jones,

Jonas Stroupe, C. B. Dixon, Ennis N. Jackson, Mason Robinson, James A. Dixon, George Torrence, Paul G. Howe, Leonard Lucas, Lester Robinson, Stacy Huffstetler and Wilson A. Forbes.

The present Board of Deacons is composed of C. M. Faires, C. C. Hoffman, Clarence Huffstetler, Coit S. Howe, C. B. Dixon, Ennis N. Jackson, Mason Robinson, James A. Dixon, George Torrence, Paul G. Howe, Leonard H. Lucas, Lester Robinson, Stacy Huffstetler and Wilson A. Forbes.

Ennis N. Jackson is Treasurer of the Church and R. C. Robinson was Treasurer, he having served for many years. Prior to this, C. P. Robinson, his uncle, and W. L. Robinson, his father, also filled this office.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

As the Sessional records have been lost, no complete list of the men who served the Church as Sunday School Superintendents can be given. Among those who have served in recent years are Joseph R. Kincaid, Geo. M. Dickson, R. Q. Howe, W. L. Hutchinson, Eli P. Lineberger, T. Q. Howe, Ennis N. Jackson, Campbell S. Dixon, and W. Roy Robinson. The Sunday School has always been active and evangelistic, and a large number of those uniting with the church by profession of faith have come from it. Regular monthly meetings of the teachers have been held for many years, and many of the teachers have taken training courses to benefit them for their task.

### TRUSTEES

The following have served the Church as Trustees: J. J. Wilson, Ed D. Huffstetler, Jonas H. Dickson, E. H. Forbes, L. E. Torrence and others whose names we do not have. The present Trustees are Ed D. Huffstetler and E. H. Forbes.

### MUSIC AND CHOIR

The American Tune Book was used for many years as the hymn book, and a few copies remain as prized possessions to be brought to the annual Singing Convention or All Day Singing of the Gaston County American Tune Book Association. According to early tradition, the hymn was started by a leader of the choir from a tuning fork. Later an organ was purchased. A piano is now used by the Church, and funds are being raised to purchase a pipe organ. Mr. R. Q. Howe led the choir for many years. Among those who served as organist or pianist are Miss Cora Wilson, Mrs. C. P. Robinson, Mrs. Lessie Robinson Bell, Mrs. Martha Howe Farris, Mrs. Louise Hawkins French and Mrs. Ennis N. Jackson. The choir loft was usually

full at the morning service and congregational singing participated in.

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK

Since 1922 active young people's organizations have flourished. For a while they were affiliated with the United Christian Endeavor, but when the Southern Presbyterian Church organized its own young people's work, Olney adopted the Young People's League plan of organization. Many of the young people have attended Synod and Presbytery Conferences and Presbytery and District rallies. There is at present a very active Young People's organization in the Church with Miss Edith Robinson as leader.

## WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

This short history of the Woman's work in our Church was written at the request of Rev. T. G. Tate to be included in his history of Olney Church. It is necessarily imperfect, owing to the fact that no minutes of earliest organizations can be found if any were written. We believe only a roll of members was kept and a record of dues paid. The first books of minutes seem to have been lost. Some is written from memory and some from information gained from our oldest members. We are glad to have this opportunity to keep alive a little of the very early history of the work of the women of Olney Church.

(Mrs. C. P.) Elizabeth Torrence Robinson.

June 1947.

During the first pastorate of Rev. J. J. Kennedy from 1883 to 1889, the women of the Church were organized. At least they appointed a leader and met once a month after morning services or at the noon hour when both morning and afternoon sessions were held. This was called the Ladies' Aid Society. Later a Missionary Society was organized, which gave a contribution to missions each year.

The Ladies Aid Society seemed to confine their gifts to local church work. They took over the care of the Church, washing windows, sweeping, and dusting the pews. They also laundered the table cloths used twice a year, spring and fall, for communion services. This was quite a chore, as they included the long cloths for the narrow, high tables which were placed in aisles across the front and center aisle, with benches on either side on which the communicants sat, as well as the table which held the elements. They were made of white linen damask, with tapes to tie the long cloths to keep from slipping.

In the very early days the women of the Ladies Aid made and carried candles to place in brackets to light the Church when

evening services were held during the spring and fall communion meetings.

From old records we find that less than \$50.00 was contributed annually in Ladies Aid Society and the Missionary Society. The History of Olney Church written by Rev. G. A. Sparrow in 1902 was issued by the Ladies Aid Society. During the pastorate of Mr. Sparrow, the Ladies Aid Society built a library room in the rear of the Church and placed therein several hundred nicely bound books for use of Sunday School and Church. The Ladies Aid was instrumental in placing the first organ in the Church, and narrow carpet runners were placed in aisles and around the pulpit by them.

At a missionary meeting held in Gastonia First Church on June 12, 1907, the Missionary Union was formed. Ten churches and thirteen societies comprised the Union. Olney came into the Union at this time. Heretofore the Societies of Churches worked separately, each carrying on as best they could. Now the Societies were to have a program of work and make reports to the Presbyterial Union of Kings Mountain Presbytery.

The Ladies Aid Society bought the first collection plates. Formerly the deacons used their hats in collecting the offering. They also bought new pulpit furniture and Communion table. They sponsored and had a choir platform built, purchased the chairs for the choir and curtain for platform. A better carpet was bought. When it was decided to replace the old organ with a piano, the women of the Church canvassed the congregation and raised the funds.

In 1912 the Supervisory Committee of Woman's Work asked that the Union be called the Presbyterial of Kings Mountain Presbytery and the organizations in the Churches be called Auxiliaries. It is not known the date the name of our Society was changed to Auxiliary. In 1917 the circle plan was adopted, but our Auxiliary did not adopt it for some time.

At the time of this writing the women of the Auxiliary are still interested in their Church building. A ladies' parlor, attractive Sunday School rooms, new carpet, curtain for choir platform, etc., attest to this.

Three active circles and a splendid business woman's circle compose the Auxiliary. Around \$1,000.00 is contributed annually to all causes.

The Olney Auxiliary is honored in having one of its members, Mrs. Ennis Jackson, serve as Presbyterial President.

We wish it were possible to give a complete list of leaders and presidents of the women's organizations. Since this is impossible, we will give an incomplete list of women who were active in the work and served as leaders. In the beginning



of the work we find the names of Mrs. David Walker, Mrs. John Edwards, Mrs. Louvan C. Torrence, Miss Jane Torrence, Mrs. Harrison S. Torrence, and Miss Margaret Torrence, who married David Howe.

A little later we have the names of Mrs. R. Lee Falls, Mrs. C. P. Robinson, Mrs. G. A. Sparrow, Mrs. Robert Howe, Mrs. E. B. Robinson, Mrs. T. G. Tate, Mrs. Ennis Jackson, Mrs. R. C. Robinson, Mrs. Quinn Howe, Mrs. Coite Howe, Mrs. Mason Robinson, Mrs. Neal Hawkins, and Mrs. Paul Howe. Many of these served several terms at different times.

## CEMETERY

One of the most interesting features of this Church is the large grave yard to the rear of the Church, to which almost daily visitors flock to read the inscriptions upon the tomb stones; on Sunday, winter and summer, great crowds resort there and numerous inquiries have come through the mail about relatives sleeping there beneath the sod. The cemetery is surrounded by a neatly trimmed hedge, and the newer part is laid in individual lots, while the old section is covered with graves without regard for order as was the custom; one corner was used to bury the bodies of the Negro slaves. The oldest grave, according to the inscription made on the tombstone, now almost illegible with age, was made in 1795. One tombstone makes the almost unbelievable statement that the departed was two hundred and eighteen years when he died. Perhaps this is an error by the graving tool, but it has been allowed to go uncorrected through all these years. One very interesting fact connected with the cemetery is that there are soldiers buried there who fought in all our American wars: The Revolutionary, War of 1812, Mexican, Civil, Spanish-American, and World War I.

In 1927 the Church bought about ten acres lying south of the old cemetery near the Ridge Mill and has enlarged the cemetery to take care of the needs of the large population surrounding the Church. Now the cemetery includes around twenty acres. Lots have been surveyed and streets laid off. Many of the pioneer families in the county have family plots in the old cemetery. A fund for the upkeep of the cemetery under the supervision of the trustees from Olney Church membership has been started. For many years R. Q. Howe had charge of the cemetery, and after his death C. C. Hoffman and Ennis Jackson continued in the work. The present trustees are Ennis Jackson, E. C. Huffstetler, C. B. Dixon, Leonard Hawkins and Roy Robinson.

A caretaker's home has been erected at the rear of the cemetery and a full-time caretaker is employed.

## SOLDIERS OF OLNEY

Olney Church has always been noted for her patriotism. Founded in part by veterans of the American Revolutionary War, men from the Church and community have enlisted in every war in which this country has been engaged. In the cemetery are graves of veterans of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War, War Between The States, Spanish-American War, and World War I. The William Gaston Chapter, D. A. R., of Gastonia, North Carolina, erected on the Church grounds a granite marker to the heroes of the Revolution. The Daughters of the Confederacy have marked many of the graves of the Civil War veterans, and on Memorial Day each year the War Mothers and American Legion plant flags on the graves of the World War I veterans who are buried there.

The church has Honor Rolls giving the names of the soldiers buried in the cemetery from each war, or, as in the case of World War I and World War II, the heroes:

### REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Capt. John Kincaid	Isaac Holland
John Wilson	James Witherspoon
Alexander Robinson	Adam Baird

### WAR OF 1812

C. A. Huffstetler	Capt John Hill
Col. Oliver W. Holland	Col. I. Harrison Holland
James Quinn, Sr.	

### MEXICAN WAR—1845

Eli Bell (Both Mexican and Civil Wars)

### SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR—1898

Daniel D. Grier

### WAR BETWEEN THE STATES—1861

Edwin B. Mendenhall	James McAlister
Marcus Torrence	Cyrus Erastus Mendenhall
James A. C. Robinson	J. F. Dixon
William B. Torrence	Thomas L. Howe
J. N. Torrence	Wm. Dixon Carroll
A. G. Falls	O. N. Torrence
Joseph R. Kincaid	Henry Hill
Joe Costner	——— Smith, of Georgia
Eli Bell	W. F. Massey
Samuel M. Wilson	J. Labin Quinn
W. R. Smith	Capt. W. I. Stowe
L. B. Ferguson	Harrison A. Torrence
A. C. Dixon	Samuel Robinson
Capt. Eli Mendenhall	Capt. Elias M. Faires

Jesse Faires  
 David J. Howe  
 H. F. Forbes  
 David Walker  
 James Quinn  
 G. W. McAlister  
 Lawson C. Torrence

Col. James Holland  
 W. F. A. Dixon  
 W. L. Hayes  
 J. L. Neagle  
 John Wilson  
 Andrew Roseman  
 Wm. R. Hill

## WORLD WAR I—1917

Wm. Nolen  
 Howard B. Jones  
 Grady Howell  
 Jonas Stroupe  
 Ben Grissom

William Huffstetler  
 Clarence Howell  
 Carl Robinson  
 Lee Hawkins

Two of the boys going from this Church to serve their Country in World War I never came back, both dying from influenza just before going overseas. They were Willie Mack Nolen and Willie Grover Huffstetler.

## WORLD WAR II—1941

Norris Capps  
 Donald W. Cole  
 Gene T. Davis  
 Charles Ray Dixon  
 Clyde G. Dixon  
 James A. Dickson, Jr.  
 Henry Falls Dixon  
 Paul Stroupe Falls  
 Edward Forbes  
 Franklin E. Forbes  
 Janette Forbes  
 Roy Lee Forbes  
 Thomas Wiley Forbes  
 Harold Dawson Grier  
 Ralph W. Grissom  
 Tommy Hope Grissom  
 William S. Grissom  
 D. S. Harkey, Jr.  
 Charles G. Hawkins  
 James Harry Hawkins  
 Millard C. Hoffman  
 William W. Howell  
 Yates S. Howell  
 Albert Miller Huffstetler  
 Andy Huffstetler  
 Carl Huffstetler

Charles Vernon Huffstetler  
 Franklin Huffstetler  
 John L. Huffstetler, Jr.  
 Larry D. Huffstetler  
 Louis C. Huffstetler  
 Robert Saye Huffstetler  
 Charles L. Hutchinson  
 William Frank Hutchinson  
 Robert Newton Jackson  
 Frank Lineberger, Jr.  
 Fred Long, Jr.  
 Ray Long  
 William Long  
 Charles McArver  
 E. P. McArver  
 Harry McArver  
 Ernest Neal Meek  
 Marvin Patterson  
 Charlie Edgar Quinn  
 Lamar Ratchford  
 Jacob Miller Rhyne  
 J. Ralph Richie  
 Alvin Robinson  
 Edgar Banks Robinson, Jr.  
 Embrey Debrew Robinson  
 Lester E. Robinson

Paul Hicks Robinson  
Raymond Clifton Robinson, Jr.  
Robert Franklin Robinson  
Rowland Warren Robinson  
William Franklin Robinson

Thomas E. Robinson, Jr.  
Gilbert R. Smith  
James L. Smith  
Raymond Philip Smith

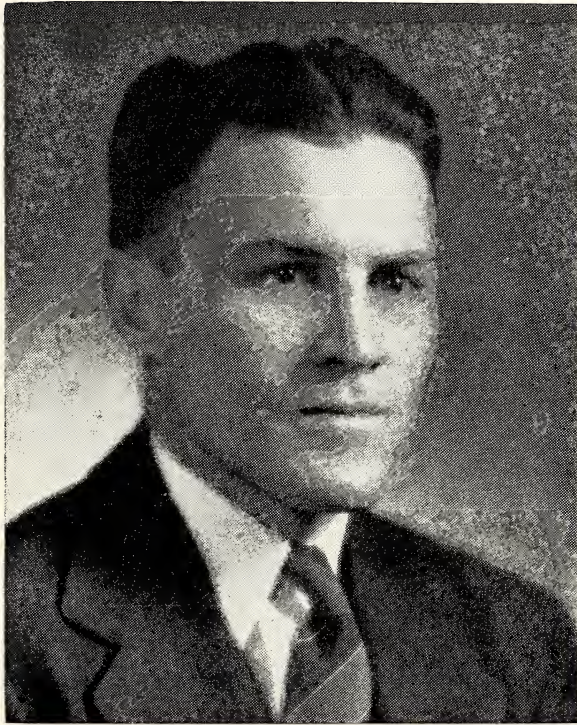
Of the large number of boys Olney sent to serve their country in World War II, all returned save one—Harry Lindsay McArver—who made the supreme sacrifice on a foreign battlefield.

While we honor our men who have so bravely responded to the call of their country in its hours of peril, let us pray earnestly that Peace on Earth and Good Will Among Men shall soon be a reality and that Olney's young men may never again be called upon to face death upon the battlefield or be in peril by sea or in the air.

### HISTORICAL RELICS

Many valuable bits of history have been lost because our fathers were not interested in preserving history. The old communion benches used for tables during the communion service have been destroyed or lost. The communion tokens used by the Session on Saturday prior to Communion Sunday, which each communing member had to deposit as he took the elements, have also been lost. There is, however, a cabinet in the vestibule of the Church which contains several valuable historical mementos of the past: First, the old tin communion cups; next, the pewter communion service used later; and last, the silver communion service used until some time about 1922, when Mr. J. Lee Robinson, a former member of the Church, gave the Church the individual communion service which the Church now uses. A copy of a written history of the Church kept up to date by Mrs. C. P. Robinson, Historian of the Woman's Auxiliary, is also deposited there. On the walls of the Session House are photographs of several of the former pastors Rev. J. J. Kennedy, Rev. G. A. Sparrow, and Rev. T. G. Tate.





### REV. NEIL E. TRUESDALE

Olney called to the pastorate Rev. Neil E. Truesdale, pastor of the Ingleside Presbyterian Church, Avondale Estates, Ga., and he began his ministry on Easter Sunday, April 19, 1944.

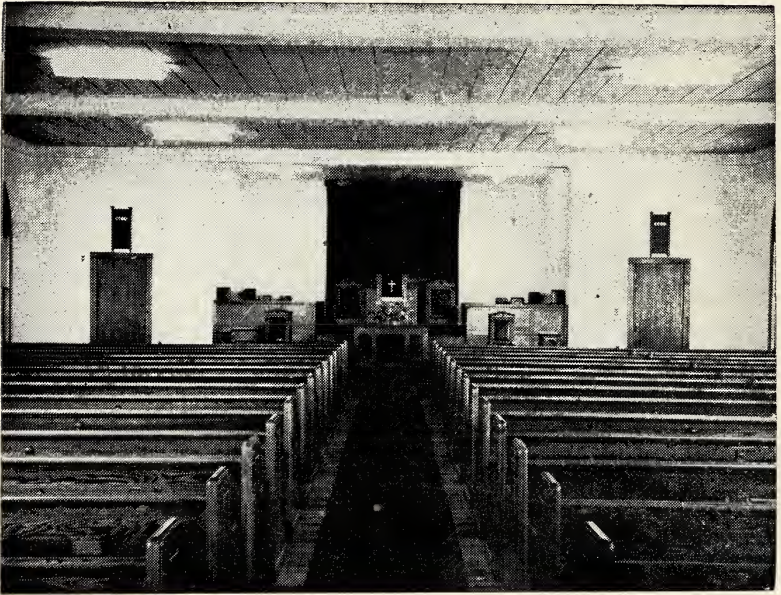
Before his arrival the manse had been painted and redecorated. Also heat was installed. The furnace was given by the families of Frank Hawkins and R. Q. Howe in honor and memory of their parents.

Rev. Mr. Truesdale and his family have won the hearts of the congregation and entered into the work of this Church with great enthusiasm and a very bright prospect is in store for this old church.

## IMPROVEMENTS

During recent years a program of enlargement and improvement has been carried out. Among other things the interior of the church was enlarged and decorated. The nave was improved by the removal of the columns and the installation of trusses to bear the weight of the roof. The walls were plastered and celotex installed on the ceiling. A new choir chancel was built.

In addition to the improvements mentioned above a new vestibule, three Sunday School rooms and a new belfry have been added.



**INTERIOR OF THE PRESENT OLNEY  
CHURCH BUILDING**

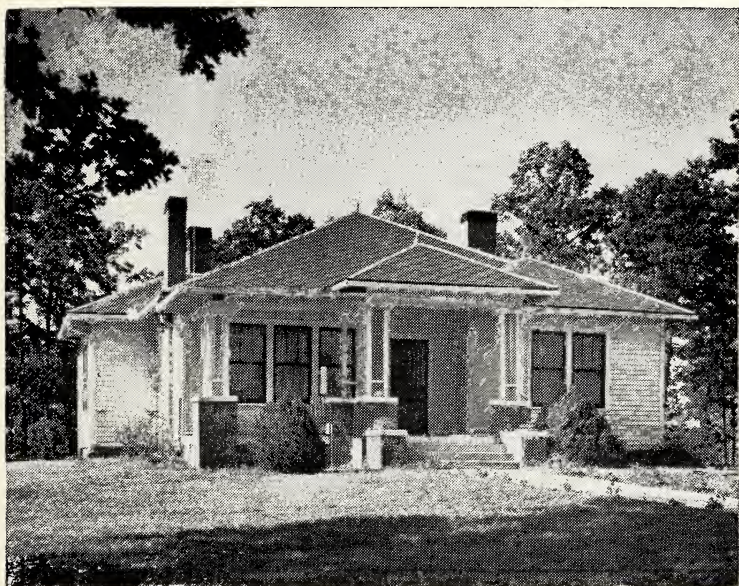
Memorial stained glass windows have been installed and add much to the beauty and to the reverent spirit in God's house.

This work has been made possible by the cooperation of the congregation and its various affiliated organizations, together with the generosity of its friends. The Fellowship Organization gave \$2000, the congregation contributed \$2573, gifts of \$3312 were received, making a total of \$7885.



Much of the material, including the brick and lumber, used in making these improvements was donated. A great deal of the work was done by the men of the church.

Over and above the cash donations made by interested friends many gifts of equipment and furnishing have been made, among which are nine pieces of pulpit furniture given in memory of Mrs. Alberry Dilling by her sons and daughters; the pews were the gift of Mrs. R. C. Robinson and the late Mr. Robinson in honor of their children and of Ralph Robinson in memory of his father, the late J. Lee Robinson.



### THE MANSE

The manse was erected in 1922. This was the first manse the church owned, since early pastors owned their own homes. During the pastorate of Rev. G. A. Sparrow, serving Union Presbyterian Church as well as Olney, the manse was at Union. A nice bungalow manse of six rooms was built on the church grounds facing the cemetery where the session house stood. The Building Committee of the manse consisted of E. B. Robinson, C. C. Hoffman, W. L. Hutchinson, E. D. Huffstetler and C. P. Robinson. In 1944 extensive improvements were made on the manse and a furnace installed, presented by the families of Frank Hawkins and R. Q. Howe in honor and memory of their parents.

## EDUCATIONAL BUILDING

We are, at the time of going to press with this history, adding to our church facilities a new educational building of brick veneer construction. This building will be of the same general lines and in harmony with the church building itself.

Contained in this building will be four general assembly rooms, two choir assembly rooms, class rooms and kitchen. The building will add around 7500 square feet of floor space.

The sketches on the front cover and on the opposite page show the building as it will appear when completed.

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## CONCLUSION

This history no doubt has left out many important items but records are scanty and some are lost. Also, recollection and memory play tricks with us. Every effort is being made to verify this history as far as humanly possible. After more than one hundred and fifty years of service in the Presbyterian Church and Christ's Kingdom, we believe greater usefulness is ahead for this Church, and our prayer is that Olney Church may have the vision and consecration to serve even more sacrificially in the years to come.



